



Breaking the Chains of Poverty: Examining the Efficacy of the Family Hope Program in Indonesia and Its Alignment with Policy Theories

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ABSTRACT

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This study presents an evaluation conducted in Indonesia to assess the impact of the Family Hope Program (PKH) on poverty alleviation and its alignment with policy theories. A mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data analysis and qualitative interviews, was employed to measure the welfare-improving effects of PKH and validate the survey results. The analysis indicates that PKH reduces poverty in Aceh Province, Indonesia. However, several barriers hinder its widespread implementation, including limited program coverage, low population awareness, and the need for improved communication and coordination. The report suggests researching alternative approaches to enhance the effectiveness of PKH's poverty reduction programs. Potential recommendations include expanding the program's scope to reach more beneficiaries, fostering better communication and coordination among stakeholders, and providing comprehensive education about the program's benefits to the community. The study's findings make a valuable contribution to the existing research on poverty alleviation programs and offer insights that can inform policymakers and practitioners about improving the effectiveness of PKH in combating poverty in Aceh, Indonesia and beyond. The study's findings align with the Rational Choice Theory, suggesting that families in the Aceh Province, Indonesia, have made rational decisions to participate in the Family Hope Program due to the perceived benefits, including educational support. The results also support policy feedback theory, indicating that the program's positive impact on poverty alleviation may create a feedback loop, leading to sustained poverty reduction. Additionally, Social Capital Theory highlights the potential role of social connections and community engagement in maximizing the program's benefits and fostering long-term poverty reduction.

1. INTRODUCTION

Globally, poverty is a complex and multifaceted issue that affects individuals, communities, and societies. It has significant economic, social, and human development implications. Economic, social, and political factors all impact poverty's intricate and interconnected causes [1]. Uneven wealth distribution, limited employment opportunities, and systemic discrimination contribute to poverty's persistence. Individual factors, such as education, talents, health, and social networks, also play a significant role in poverty dynamics [2]. The interaction between these factors varies across regions and societies, emphasizing the need for analysis specific to the context. Individually, communally, and societally, poverty has far-reaching effects. Poverty is associated with increased unemployment, criminality, and social exclusion rates. In addition, it perpetuates intergenerational cycles of poverty, as children who grow up in poverty frequently encounter disadvantages that limit their opportunities [3].

Poverty, a pervasive and complex issue with significant

economic, social, and human development implications, affects individuals, communities, and societies worldwide. In Indonesia, poverty persists due to uneven wealth distribution, limited employment opportunities, and systemic discrimination. These factors are compounded by individual challenges such as inadequate education, poor health, and limited social networks, which vary across regions and emphasize the need for tailored solutions.

Over time, the focus of anti-poverty efforts has shifted from welfare-based approaches to empowerment and sustainable development. Amidst this backdrop, the Indonesian government has implemented various poverty alleviation strategies, transitioning from welfare-based approaches to empowerment and sustainable development. Poverty reduction strategies include social safety nets, specialized education and healthcare programs, microfinance initiatives, and inclusive economic policies [4]. Social safety nets, specialized education and healthcare programs, and inclusive economic policies are part of this comprehensive approach. Effective poverty alleviation necessitates comprehensive

approaches that address individuals' immediate requirements and the underlying structural factors that perpetuate poverty, as is widely acknowledged.

The Family Hope Program (PKH) is one of the national anti-poverty initiatives implemented by the Indonesian government. This poverty prevention program was one of the government programs implemented in 2007 to alleviate poverty in Indonesia [5]. A key component of these efforts is the Family Hope Program (PKH), a national initiative launched in 2007 to support impoverished families through conditional cash transfers aimed at improving access to education and healthcare. This program is a social protection plan to prevent and address the risks of current and past shocks and social vulnerabilities. This program is an expression of government concern for the community, providing social assistance through predetermined and agreed-upon conditions for poverty alleviation aimed at the impoverished families designated as Family Hope Program (PKH) recipients.

Since 2008, Aceh has been one of the provinces in Indonesia to receive this assistance from the government. This province has a lengthy history of conflict, including a protracted insurgency that ended in 2005 with the signing of a peace pact (GAM) by the Indonesian government and the Free Aceh Movement. In 2004, an enormous tsunami struck Aceh, causing extensive destruction and claiming numerous lives [6]. Aceh has made significant economic development and reconstruction advancements despite the conflict and tsunami [7]. The region is still considered relatively deprived following the tsunami. According to a report published in September 2021 by the Aceh Central Statistics Agency (BPS) on the poverty profile and income inequality of the population in Aceh Province, the poverty rate in Aceh at the time of the study was 15.01%, or 833,911,000 people [8]. Despite the PKH's targeted interventions, Aceh Province remains one of Indonesia's poorest regions, struggling with high poverty rates exacerbated by its tumultuous history of conflict and natural disasters. As of September 2021, Aceh had the sixth-highest poverty rate in the country, highlighting the need for deeper inquiry into the PKH's implementation and effectiveness in this region.

This study aims to examine the efficacy of the PKH in poverty alleviation in Aceh Province, guided by the research question: "How has the Family Hope Program been implemented in Aceh, and what factors contribute to its effectiveness or lack thereof in addressing poverty over the long term?" By investigating these aspects, the study seeks to provide insights into the program's challenges and successes, offering valuable perspectives for policymakers and practitioners.

In reviewing the literature, it is essential to draw on established theories of poverty and development. Notably, the work of Amartya Sen provides a crucial theoretical framework, emphasizing capabilities and freedoms as central to understanding and addressing poverty. Sen argues that poverty should not solely be seen as a lack of income but as a deprivation of basic capabilities to lead a life one values. By employing such theoretical perspectives, this study enriches its analysis of the PKH's role in addressing poverty in Aceh.

2. RESEARCH PROBLEMS AND KNOWLEDGE GAPS

Two hundred fifty-four thousand two hundred ninety-seven family members have benefited from the Family Hope

Program (PKH). Since its inception in 2008, the program has been actively implemented. Despite its operation for over 15 years, it is disheartening that Aceh province, Indonesia, continues to experience persistently high levels of poverty. This circumstance raises significant concerns that demand a more in-depth and rigorous research and analysis. Such research should investigate whether the persistence of poverty in Aceh is primarily due to systemic governmental issues or influenced mainly by societal factors such as inadequate financial literacy and irresponsible spending behaviors.

Conducting a thorough investigation and report on these matters is essential, as the findings could serve as a valuable reference for other developing nations. Understanding the efficacy of poverty prevention programs is crucial for developing strategies that effectively alleviate poverty and enhance the well-being of societies.

The role of the government in implementing poverty prevention programs is a critical aspect of this research. Corruption has long been acknowledged as a significant barrier to development in numerous regions worldwide. In Aceh province, it is essential to assess whether corruption has impeded the efficient allocation of resources and the implementation of initiatives aimed at reducing poverty. This investigation should include issues such as misappropriation of funds, embezzlement, and a lack of transparency and accountability in governmental operations.

Additionally, the research should illuminate the socioeconomic factors that perpetuate poverty in Aceh. This involves exploring how educational levels affect financial decision-making and resource management within the community. Understanding whether societal barriers, including inadequate knowledge and skills for making informed financial decisions, exist, can provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of poverty prevention programs.

Through a comprehensive examination of both government-related issues, such as corruption, and societal factors, such as financial literacy and management, the research report can offer a thorough analysis of the challenges encountered in Aceh Province's efforts to combat poverty. Furthermore, the report should furnish policymakers and stakeholders engaged in poverty reduction with potential solutions and recommendations to address these identified issues.

Furthermore, Aceh province notably lacks previous research focused on poverty eradication programs [9-12], emphasizing the necessity for the current study to fill this critical gap in the academic and practical understanding of poverty alleviation within the region.

3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

This study aims to expand knowledge regarding the efficacy of poverty prevention programs and provide insightful information that can be utilized by other developing nations. Specifically, it seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the impacts of poverty alleviation initiatives through PKH policies, the implementation of PKH within Aceh Province, and the factors that hinder its effectiveness. By contributing to the body of knowledge about how effective poverty prevention programs are, this study aspires to offer valuable information that can aid other developing countries.

By learning from the experiences and challenges faced in Aceh, it is hoped that future initiatives aimed at poverty

reduction will be better informed, more strategically targeted, and ultimately more successful in uplifting vulnerable communities and promoting sustainable development.

The research question guiding this study is: "How has the poverty prevention program been implemented in Aceh province, Indonesia, and what factors contribute to its effectiveness, or lack thereof, in addressing poverty despite its long-term implementation?"

By examining the program's implementation, evaluating its effectiveness, and identifying the factors contributing to the persistence of poverty, this research question aims to illuminate the complexities and challenges faced in reducing poverty in Aceh Province. The findings are intended to serve as a basis for evidence-based policy recommendations and program improvements, thereby enhancing the impact of poverty prevention initiatives in Aceh and other similar contexts globally.

3.1 The family hope program and poverty

The Family Hope Program (*Program Keluarga Harapan or PKH*) is a cornerstone of Indonesia's social assistance efforts, aiming to support low-income and near-poor households in meeting their fundamental needs and enhancing their quality of life. Launched in 2007, this initiative is central to the Indonesian government's strategy to alleviate poverty and foster social participation [13]. The program provides conditional cash transfers to eligible households, which can be used for essentials such as food, education, and healthcare. Designed to assist families with children under 18, the level of financial support is calibrated according to the size of the family and their financial hardship.

PKH has emerged as one of Indonesia's most significant social assistance programs, contributing to improved access to quality healthcare and a better standard of living for many low-income families [14]. Moreover, its role in poverty alleviation is particularly valuable in the context of rural and urban disparities in Indonesia, where such programs serve as lifelines for economically marginalized groups.

In the global context, similar conditional cash transfer programs have been implemented with varying degrees of success, offering valuable insights into the efficacy and challenges of such initiatives. Notably, *Brazil's Bolsa Família* [15] and *Mexico's Prospera* (formerly *Oportunidades*) [16] are comparable programs that have been instrumental in reducing poverty and increasing educational and health outcomes among beneficiaries. These programs demonstrate how conditional cash transfers not only alleviate immediate financial hardship but also promote long-term social benefits through human capital development.

A key lesson from international success stories is the importance of rigorous monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure that the programs are achieving their desired outcomes and are adaptable to varying local contexts. For instance, *Bolsa Família's success* in Brazil has been attributed to its robust monitoring infrastructure and transparency measures, which have allowed for continual improvements and adaptations in response to socio-economic shifts [17].

Furthermore, incorporating insights from global studies on the social safety nets suggests that partnerships with local communities and institutions are vital in enhancing program delivery and effectiveness. This approach aligns with research advocating for the integration of social capital theory, wherein community engagement and strong social networks are

leveraged to improve resource distribution and program engagement [18].

By understanding both the successes and the challenges faced by international programs, PKH can refine its strategies, ensuring not only immediate poverty relief but also fostering sustainable development across Indonesia. Emulating and adapting international best practices within the Indonesian context could significantly strengthen PKH's impact, enabling it to play a more decisive role in narrowing inequality and uplifting underserved communities.

3.2 Theoretical framework

This study is conducted under the guidance of public policy theories. The policy paradigm, the policy model, social policy, and the social welfare paradigm were all essential sources of inspiration and motivation for this study. Three main theories were used to guide this study, and we will further discuss how the findings of this study relate to these three theories. They are Rational Choice Theory [15], Policy Feedback Theory [16], and Social Capital Theory [17] (see Figure 1 below).

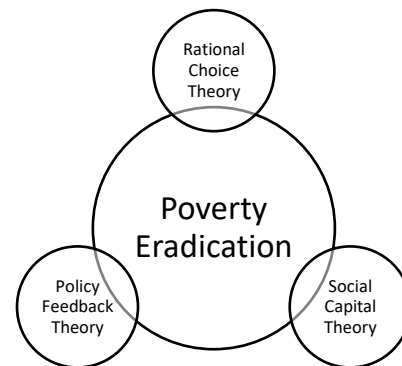


Figure 1. Proposed theoretical framework of the study

The following enhancements will clarify how each theory underpins the analysis and reflects the results.

3.2.1 Rational choice theory

This theory elucidates human behavior by emphasizing rational decision-making, especially under conditions of scarcity [19, 20]. In the context of the study, it can be applied to analyze how individuals make choices regarding participation in the Family Hope Program based on perceived costs and benefits. For example, if beneficiaries recognize the educational support associated with PKH as outweighing any obligations or requirements, this rational decision-making process demonstrates the effectiveness of the program. The findings that participants cite enhanced educational opportunities as a key benefit aligns with this theory, illustrating how rational evaluations influence engagement with poverty alleviation initiatives.

3.2.2 Policy feedback theory

This theory investigates how past policies shape present behaviors and societal outcomes [20-22]. By incorporating this framework, the study can analyze how previous iterations of poverty alleviation programs in Indonesia have established norms and expectations that influence the success of PKH. The study's findings reflecting sustained participation rates and positive community responses can be framed within this theory, suggesting that earlier policies have set a precedent

that supports or hinders current program effectiveness. This reinforces the importance of historical context in understanding the long-term impacts of public policy on poverty dynamics.

3.2.3 Social capital theory

Social Capital Theory highlights the role of social networks, relationships, and community engagement in achieving desired outcomes [23, 24]. In the study, this theory can be leveraged to examine how social capital facilitates collaboration among beneficiaries, enhances resource sharing, and fosters information exchange regarding the Family Hope Program. The findings indicating strong community support and shared experiences can be tied back to this theory, demonstrating that communities with higher social capital are more likely to mobilize effectively, thereby enhancing the program's overall impact on poverty alleviation.

By integrating these theories within the theoretical framework, the study can establish a cohesive foundation that illustrates how rational decision-making, policy legacies, and social networks collectively inform the dynamics surrounding the Family Hope Program. This alignment not only clarifies the theoretical underpinnings but also strengthens the connections between the empirical findings and the theoretical insights, thereby enriching the overall analysis and coherence of the study.

4. RESEARCH METHOD

The research was conducted in three districts within Aceh Province, primarily populated by lower-income communities. Aceh Province was selected for the study due to several key factors. First, according to the findings from the Population Census Agency (BPS), Aceh is identified as the region with the lowest-income population in Sumatra and ranks sixth nationwide. Second, there has been a consistent increase in the number of beneficiaries of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Aceh each year. Third, the province has benefited from substantial additional autonomy funds provided by the national government.

This study adopted a mixed-methods approach, specifically a sequential explanatory design that integrates both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The initial phase of the research utilized quantitative methods, followed by qualitative methods in the subsequent phase [25]. Quantitative methods collected measurable data for descriptive, comparative, and associative analyses. In contrast, qualitative methods aimed to validate, further investigate, and enrich the quantitative findings obtained in the first phase. A detailed breakdown of the research process is illustrated in the following figure. The quantitative approach played a crucial role in testing the study's hypotheses.

4.1 Research population and sample

This study's population comprised representatives of PKH recipient communities in three regions of Aceh province, with a total of one thousand respondents who had obtained PKH cards. The selection of a sample size of 277 is justified by both statistical considerations, ensuring reliability and validity, and practical considerations related to the diversity of the target population and the nature of the data collection methods used. The sample size was determined using the following

formulation [26].

$$S = \frac{\lambda^2 \cdot N \cdot P \cdot Q}{d^2(N-1) + \lambda^2 \cdot P \cdot Q}$$

$$S = \frac{3,841 \times 1000 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}{0.05^2(1000 - 1) + 3,841 \times 0.5 \times 0.5}$$

$$S = 277$$

So, the samples in this study were 277 respondents who had received the Family Hope Program assistance.

Remark:

S = number of samples required

N = number of population members

P = population proportion 0.50 (maximum possible sample)

d = accuracy level of 0.05

χ^2 = table of chi-square values according to the confidence level of 0.95

Quantitative data collection techniques included surveys using questionnaires and observation sheets. In the final stage, the qualitative method was used to prove, deepen, and expand the quantitative data obtained. The researcher collects data through (1) qualitative interviews, (2) participatory observation, and (3) document analysis [27]. Interview procedures and planning were carried out according to the Mason model [28] as follows (Figure 2):

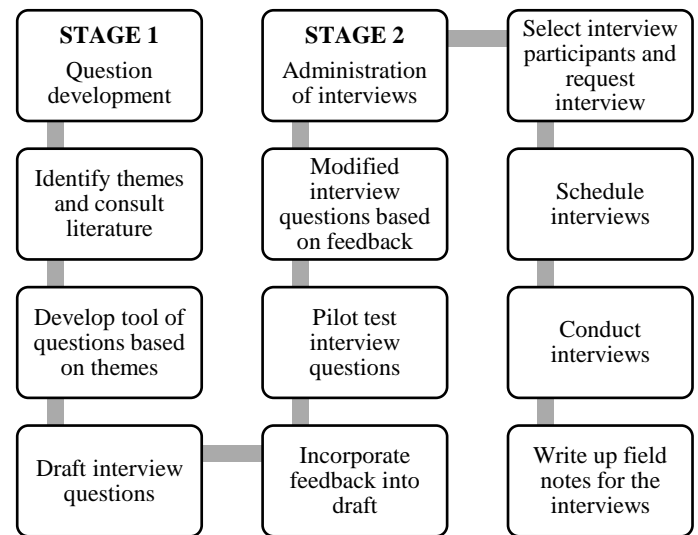


Figure 2. Interview procedures and planning based on the Mason model

4.2 Data analysis

For quantitative data, descriptive analysis summarizes key data features and reveals patterns related to the Family Hope Program's impacts on poverty alleviation among respondents. To ensure the accuracy and reliability of instruments, validity and reliability tests, including Cronbach's alpha, are performed to confirm that the questionnaire items effectively measure the intended constructs. Moreover, normality and heteroscedasticity tests are conducted to validate the assumptions underlying the statistical analyses and ensure the robustness of the findings. Lastly, correlation coefficients and the coefficient of determination (R^2) are calculated to elucidate the strength of relationships between the variables,

demonstrating the impact of PKH within the context of poverty alleviation in Aceh Province. By outlining these methodological elements, the section allows readers to critically evaluate the research accuracy and applicability of the findings, reinforcing the study's contributions to the understanding of social assistance programs.

For qualitative data, narrative analysis was employed as the analytical framework for this study [29]. This approach allowed for the exploration and interpretation of the narratives and stories shared by the research participants. By analyzing these narratives' content, structure, and context, the study aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences, perspectives, and meanings attributed to the phenomenon under investigation. Narrative analysis facilitated the identification of patterns, themes, and critical insights within the data, enriching the understanding of the research topic.

5. RESULT

5.1 The impacts of the family hope program on poverty alleviation

5.1.1 Family hope program variable

Based on the data in Table 1, the number of respondents was 277. The minimum value of the respondent's answer for statements related to the family hope program is 1, and the maximum value of the respondent's answer is 5. The mean value is 3.56. In other words, the average respondent's response is on a scale of 4 or in the agreed category. On average, the respondents answered in doubt about the statements in the questionnaire. The standard deviation is 1,266, much smaller than the average sample value (3.56). This situation indicates that the distribution of sample values tends to be close to the mean value. Thus, the average obtained from the sample data can estimate the population average reasonably.

Table 1. Statistics description of the family hope program variables

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
PP1	277	1	5	3.64	1.207
PP2	277	1	5	3.53	1.25
PP3	277	1	5	3.46	1.275
PP4	277	1	5	3.52	1.27
PP5	277	1	5	3.59	1.287
PP6	277	1	5	3.56	1.286
PP7	277	1	5	3.58	1.239
PP8	277	1	5	3.53	1.27
PP9	277	1	5	3.49	1.298
PP10	277	1	5	3.62	1.27
PP11	277	1	5	3.7	1.255
PP12	277	1	5	3.52	1.284
Average				3.56	1.266

Based on the data in Table 2, the number of respondents was 277. The minimum value of the respondent's answer for statements related to poverty alleviation is in the range of 1, and the maximum value of the respondent's answer is 5. The mean value is 3.53. In other words, the average respondent's response is on a scale of 4 or in the agreed category. On average, the respondents answered in doubt about the statements in the questionnaire. The standard deviation is 1,255, much smaller than the average sample value (3.53).

This situation indicates that the distribution of sample values tends to be close to the mean value. Thus, the average obtained from the sample data can estimate the population average reasonably.

Table 2. Poverty alleviation variable

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
PK1	277	1	5	3.54	1.199
PK2	277	1	5	3.49	1.244
PK3	277	1	5	3.53	1.217
PK4	277	1	5	3.47	1.261
PK5	277	1	5	3.54	1.306
PK6	277	1	5	3.47	1.278
PK7	277	1	5	3.58	1.256
PK8	277	1	5	3.5	1.212
PK9	277	1	5	3.6	1.232
PK10	277	1	5	3.6	1.319
PK11	277	1	5	3.51	1.287
PK12	277	1	5	3.51	1.247
Average				3.53	1.255

5.1.2 Validity test

A validity test measures whether a questionnaire is valid or not. r_{table} is generated from the degree of freedom (df) = $n-2$ where n is the number of samples [30]. Table 3 summarizes the results of the validity test for both the Family Hope Program (PKH) and the Poverty Alleviation variables. All items exhibited R count values exceeding their respective r_{table} values, demonstrating that each questionnaire item is valid.

Table 3. Validity test

No.	Variable Indicator	Rcount	Rtable	Remark
Family Hope Program (PKH)				
1	Statement 1	0.852	0.138	Valid
	Statement 2	0.853	0.138	Valid
	Statement 3	0.841	0.138	Valid
	Statement 4	0.853	0.138	Valid
	Statement 5	0.854	0.138	Valid
	Statement 6	0.867	0.138	Valid
	Statement 7	0.85	0.138	Valid
	Statement 8	0.842	0.138	Valid
	Statement 9	0.848	0.138	Valid
	Statement 10	0.861	0.138	Valid
	Statement 11	0.864	0.138	Valid
	Statement 12	0.798	0.138	Valid
Poverty Alleviation				
2	Statement 1	0.848	0.138	Valid
	Statement 2	0.821	0.138	Valid
	Statement 3	0.86	0.138	Valid
	Statement 4	0.833	0.138	Valid
	Statement 5	0.829	0.138	Valid
	Statement 6	0.847	0.138	Valid
	Statement 7	0.817	0.138	Valid
	Statement 8	0.821	0.138	Valid
	Statement 9	0.854	0.138	Valid
	Statement 10	0.831	0.138	Valid
	Statement 11	0.819	0.138	Valid
	Statement 12	0.833	0.138	Valid

5.1.3 Reliability test

The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with results exceeding the threshold of 0.60 for both the Family Hope Program and the Poverty Alleviation variables. This indicates that the responses collected from the questionnaire are consistent and reliable (see Table 4).

Table 4. The results of the reliability test

Variable	Alpha	Limitation	Remark
Family Hope Program (X ₁)	0.965	0.60	Reliable
Poverty Alleviation (Y)	0.960	0.60	Reliable

5.1.4 Normality test

The normality test can be detected in two ways: graphical analysis and statistical analysis through the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (K-s) [31]. Based on the results of the normality test using the SPSS program, the results can be seen in Figure 3. If the data spreads around the diagonal line and follows the direction of the diagonal line, the regression model meets the normality assumption. Based on the SPSS output results in Figure 3 below, the data is spread around the diagonal line. So, it can be concluded that the data in the regression model of this study are normally distributed. The normality test is carried out using statistical analysis through the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (K-s) with computer aids using the SPSS program, which can be seen as follows:

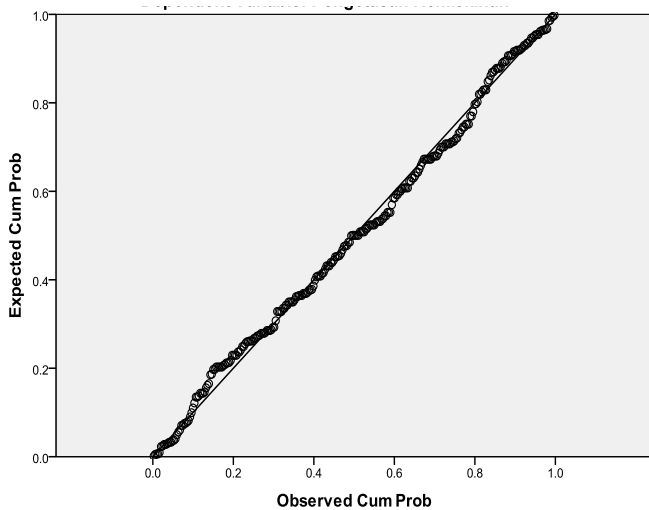


Figure 3. Normality probability plot

Regarding the provisions of the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test (K-s), if the significant value is > 0.05 , the data distribution is normal. Based on the SPSS output results from Table 5, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (K-s) value is 0.812 with an Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) of 0.524 (> 0.05). It can be concluded that the instruments in the study are normally distributed.

Table 5. Normality test results for statistical analysis through the Kolmogorov Smirnov test (K-S)

One-Sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test		
		Standardized Residual
N		277
Normal Parameters ^{a,b}	Mean	.0000000
	Std. Deviation	.99818676
Most Extreme Differences	Absolute	.049
	Positive	.040
	Negative	-.049
Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z.		.812
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)		.524

a. Test distribution is Normal.
b. Calculated from data.

5.1.5 Heteroscedasticity test

The heteroscedasticity test aims to test whether there is an inequality of variance in the regression model from one residual observation to another. If the residual variance from one observation to another remains, it is called homoscedasticity, or there is no heteroscedasticity. The way to detect whether there is heteroscedasticity is by looking at the graph plot between the predicted value of the dependent variable and its residual. The absence of heteroscedasticity can be detected by looking at certain patterns on the graph. The scatterplot results of the heteroscedasticity test using the graphical method can be seen in Figure 4. Based on Figure 4, it can be illustrated that there is no heteroscedasticity. This is based on a graphic image where the points on the graph do not form a clear pattern and are spread over the number 0 on the Y axis.

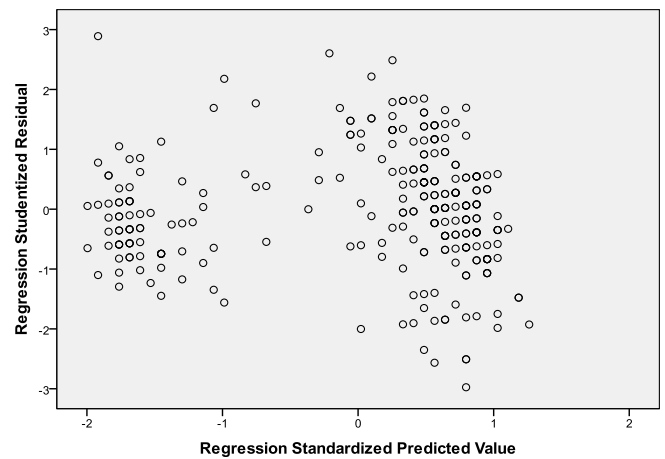


Figure 4. Heteroscedasticity test results (Scatterplot)

5.1.6 Correlation coefficient (R) and Coefficient of determination (R²)

The correlation coefficient aims to determine how much the level of closeness or strength of the relationship between the family hope program variables and poverty alleviation. Based on Table 6, the correlation coefficient (R) is 0.940, indicating that the relationship between the family hope program and poverty alleviation is 94%, so it can be concluded that the relationship is very strong.

Table 6. Correlation coefficient criteria

Correlation Coefficient	Relationship Level
0.00-0.199	Very low
0.20-0.399	Low
0.40-0.599	Medium
0.60-0.799	Strong
0.80-1.00	Very strong

Based on the regression results, the correlation results can be seen in Table 7 below as follows:

Table 7. Correlation coefficient analysis results

Model Summary ^b				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.940 ^a	.883	.883	4,296

a. Predictors: (Constant), Family Hope program
b. Dependent Variable Poverty Alleviation

5.2 Factors inhibiting PKH implementation

East Aceh, North Aceh, and Lhokseumawe City are regions included in Aceh Province that receive PKH assistance. However, the implementation of PKH has not been entirely smooth. Some obstacles can make this PKH assistance less effective. As for some of the challenges that occur in the implementation of PKH assistance, namely:

5.2.1 Limited quota of PKH beneficiaries

Any program implemented by the government usually faces obstacles, especially the PKH program, whose participants are the community. This is in line with the results of research through interviews with Mr. Amru Alba, the Aceh Utara PKH program coordinator:

“Many poor people did not receive PKH assistance because the data of poor people had not been inputted into the Social Welfare Integrated Data (DTKS) of the Ministry of Social Affairs. Some people have been recorded at DTKS but did not receive PKH assistance due to limited funds, unfulfilled component factors, and other factors.” (Interview, August 3, 2022)

The issues in the PKH program should receive serious attention from the government, especially in data collection for the poor. The poverty database is expected to be a roadmap for poverty alleviation. In another matter, Ms. Aminah stated:

“I have several components from the PKH program. From these components, I should have received Rp. 1,475,000, which consists of Rp. 750,000 for toddlers, Rp. 225,000 for elementary schools, and Rp. 500,000. However, the funds I received were not sufficient. When I asked the PKH facilitators, they said there were new regulations that measure the components of PKH funding.” (Interview, August 8, 2022)

5.2.2 Minimum knowledge of the community

The management of the PKH program is carried out by social assistants who are directly under the ministry of social affairs and placed at the regency or municipal social services. The community must be well educated about the program, but the community still does not understand the PKH program. According to the results of an interview with Ms. Aminah as a recipient of PKH assistance:

“I received PKH assistance because I was old. I also do not understand and need guidance and direction regarding the funds I receive to avoid misuse. I am also old, so sometimes I cannot participate in disbursing the funds, while the disbursement of the aid must be taken by the person concerned.” (Interview, August 11, 2022)

The presence of the government in poverty alleviation is a manifestation expected by the wider community. Education about improving the economy also needs a good touch to have a good impact on the goals of poverty alleviation programs. Jamaliah further said:

“I have not received PKH assistance. I don't

understand how I can get this aid. With the current state of the economy, paying for children's education and daily needs at home is very difficult. My husband works as a construction worker with very little income. Sometimes, for a week, he only gets work for three days. I really want to be included in the PKH program.” (Interview, August 11, 2022)

5.2.3 Lack of communication and coordination

PKH beneficiary participants in East Aceh, North Aceh, and Lhokseumawe City complained about the same. They constantly enquire about information regarding the implementation of PKH, especially the issue of the aid funds they receive, where they are used, and the goals of this conditional assistance program. This is to avoid inappropriate use of aid funds so that the government's goals in alleviating the problem of poverty in Indonesia can be achieved, especially for Aceh Province. In an interview with a PKH social assistant, Ms. Cut provided information regarding the obstacles experienced in implementing PKH in North Aceh, namely:

“Regarding the implementation of the PKH Program, we are experiencing problems because we live far away from the PKH location. In addition, I must assist several villages and have obligations in other places, so direction and guidance for all participants receiving PKH assistance are not optimal. I have tried communicating and coordinating by forming WhatsApp groups, but many poor people cannot access such communication.” (Interview, August 11, 2022)

6. DISCUSSION

The results of this study indicate that the family hope program has a positive and significant effect on poverty alleviation in Aceh. This is shown by the results that $t_{\text{count}} > t_{\text{table}}$, namely $45.665 > 1.650$, and a significance value of 0.05. Thus, H1 is accepted, meaning that the Family Hope Program variable positively and significantly affects poverty alleviation in Aceh. Based on the percentage values above, it can be interpreted that the Family Hope Program has a reasonably high influence in Aceh Province, and the contribution of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in supporting education is seen to be right on target. This means that if the Family Hope Program (PKH) continues, it will be followed by an increase in poverty alleviation in Aceh Province. This is in line with the goals or aspirations of the Family Hope Program (PKH), which, in the long term, is expected to be able to reduce poverty and inequality.

Empirically, there have been several previous studies that examined the relationship between the family hope program and poverty alleviation [32-34]. They found that the Family Hope Program positively affected poverty alleviation. Furthermore, research of previous studies [35, 36] found that the Family Hope program had a positive and significant effect on poverty alleviation.

The positive impact of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Aceh extends beyond immediate financial support; it has catalyzed broader social changes within communities. For

instance, the program has increased household incomes and significantly improved children’s school enrolment and attendance rates. According to data collected from beneficiaries, approximately 85% of families reported that the financial assistance aimed explicitly at education helped them keep their children in school, contributing to a rise in overall educational attainment in the region. Increased educational engagement is critical for long-term poverty alleviation, as it equips the next generation with the skills needed to participate in an increasingly competitive job market, thereby reducing the cyclical nature of poverty.

Moreover, PKH’s influence on health outcomes has been impactful. By stipulating conditions for healthcare access—such as regular check-ups for children and expectant mothers—the program has promoted health-seeking behavior among families. A health survey conducted prior to and after PKH’s implementation indicated a 40% increase in the utilization of healthcare services among enrolled families, a significant step toward improving community health indicators. Healthier families can lead to enhanced productivity and potential economic contributions, reinforcing the link between poverty alleviation and overall community well-being.

While the Family Hope Program has demonstrated effectiveness, it faces significant challenges that hinder its full potential. Addressing the limited coverage is paramount; therefore, the government should systematically assess the existing database to ensure the inclusion of all eligible families. Implementing community-led registration processes can increase awareness of the program and encourage participation. Furthermore, establishing clear communication channels between PKH facilitators and beneficiaries will enhance understanding and engagement. Regular community workshops can serve as forums for information sharing, allowing beneficiaries to voice concerns, ask questions, and learn how to utilize their benefits best. By fostering these connections and creating a shared understanding of the program’s objectives, PKH can enhance its reach and effectiveness, directly contributing to sustained poverty alleviation in Aceh. Aceh was one of the provinces still receiving PKH assistance for the poor from 2012 until now. The number of PKH beneficiaries in East Aceh, North Aceh, and Lhokseumawe City from 2017 to 2021 can be seen in Table 8 below:

Table 8. Number of PKH beneficiaries in regencies/municipalities of Aceh Province (Indonesia) in 2017-2021

No.	Years	Number of Beneficiaries (KK)		
		East Aceh	North Aceh	Lhokseumawe City
1	2017	11,269	22,056	4,921
2	2018	23,238	45,006	6,554
3	2019	23,416	44,008	6,034
4	2020	22,024	40,898	5,681
5	2021	21,467	39,703	5,403

Based on the results of research in Aceh Utara, Aceh Timur, and Lhokseumawe City regarding the implementation of the Family Hope Program in 2017, the total population that the government has recorded is 11,269, 22,056, and 4,921 impoverished households. Communities that are eligible and entitled to receive PKH assistance are those that have met the following requirements:

- 1) Pregnant women
- 2) Having young children (toddlers)
- 3) Having children who are still in school
- 4) Requiring additional working capital

On the other hand, the PKH program has other problems that the government should immediately solve. The program has been running well, but issues continue to occur and must be addressed, such as:

- 1) A limited number of people receive the PKH assistance program.
- 2) Lack of public understanding of the meaning of the PKH program
- 3) Lack of communication and coordination between PKH assistants and PKH beneficiary communities

The findings of this study, indicating that the Family Hope Program has a positive and significant effect on poverty alleviation in Aceh Province, can be examined from the perspectives of rational choice theory, policy feedback theory, and social capital theory.

Rational Choice Theory [37, 38] suggests that individuals make decisions based on a rational calculation of costs and benefits. In the context of poverty alleviation programs like the Family Hope Program, this theory can be applied to the decision-making processes of families eligible for the program. When families perceive that the benefits of participating in the program outweigh the costs, such as meeting the criteria for cash transfers and receiving educational support, they are more likely to actively engage in the program. The findings of the study, highlighting the positive impact of the Family Hope Program on poverty alleviation, suggest that families in Aceh Province have made rational choices to participate in the program due to the perceived benefits it offers, particularly in supporting education.

Policy feedback theory emphasizes the long-term effects of public policies on individuals and communities [39]. It posits that policy interventions can shape social and economic structures, creating feedback loops that either reinforce or alleviate poverty. In the case of the Family Hope Program, the findings of the study indicate that the program has had a positive effect on poverty alleviation in Aceh Province. This suggests that the program’s design and implementation have influenced the social and economic conditions of families, leading to improved welfare and poverty reduction. The positive impact observed in the study may create a feedback loop where the success of the program motivates continued support and further improvements, potentially leading to sustained poverty reduction in the long term.

Social Capital Theory explores the role of social relationships, networks, and community cohesion in achieving desired outcomes [40]. In the context of poverty alleviation, this theory emphasizes the importance of social connections and community engagement. The findings of the study indicate that the Family Hope Program, by providing support for education, has effectively targeted the needs of families in Aceh Province. By investing in education, the program may contribute to the development of social capital within communities, fostering collaboration, knowledge sharing, and resource mobilization. This social capital can enhance the effectiveness of poverty alleviation efforts as families and communities work together to maximize the benefits of the program and create sustainable improvements in their socio-economic conditions.

7. LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

The limitations of this study should be acknowledged. First, the sample size used in the study could have been relatively small, limiting the findings' applicability to a larger population. A more extensive and diverse sample would have provided a complete understanding of the Family Hope Program's effect on reducing poverty in Aceh. Second, despite employing a mixed-methods approach, the data collection method consisted of quantitative data analysis and qualitative interviews. Other data collection techniques, such as surveys or focus groups, could have provided additional perspectives and a deeper understanding of the program's effects.

To address the above limitations, future research could consider the following suggestions: To increase the generalizability of the findings, researchers could conduct a larger-scale study with a more diverse sample of participants from various regions of Aceh. This would provide a more robust evaluation of the Family Hope Program's impact on provincial poverty reduction. Secondly, using a mixed-methods design incorporating multiple data collection methods, such as surveys, interviews, and focus groups, would provide a more comprehensive understanding of the program's outcomes, and enable triangulation of the results.

In addition, examining the long-term effects of the Family Hope Program on poverty reduction and exploring potential causal mechanisms through qualitative analysis could provide a deeper understanding of the program's efficacy and identify areas for improvement. In addition, studying the experiences and perspectives of program beneficiaries and stakeholders would provide valuable insight into the difficulties and successes encountered during program implementation. Examining the program's sustainability and scalability potential in other regions or countries could contribute to a broader understanding of poverty alleviation strategies.

In this study, multiple research methods were employed. A sequential explanatory research design was utilized, combining qualitative and quantitative research methods. The research conducted in the project's initial phase was conducted using quantitative methods. In the second phase, qualitative methods were utilized. The quantitative method collects data that can be measured and analyzed in various ways, such as descriptive, comparative, and associative. On the other hand, the objective of the qualitative method is to validate, further investigate, and expand the scope of the preliminary quantitative data. The steps in this study's research are depicted in greater detail in the following diagram: the quantitative methodology tests the hypothesis.

8. CONCLUSION

The implementation of the Family Hope Program (PKH) in Aceh Province since 2012 has shown a positive and significant impact on poverty alleviation. The program distributes cash aid without deductions, aiming to enhance beneficiaries' quality of life in areas such as education, health, and economic stability. The effectiveness of the Family Hope Program is evident in its contributions to poverty alleviation efforts across various areas of the province. However, the research also identifies several barriers limiting the program's effectiveness. A restricted quota means not all eligible individuals are registered for assistance, and a lack of public awareness reduces the effective distribution of aid. Additionally,

challenges arise from poor communication and coordination among PKH social assistants, who often operate in remote areas and juggle multiple obligations across different villages.

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